



ABSTRACT AND BIOGRAPHY

Beyond the Blog: The New Rules of Collaboration and Communication

In the beginning, there were meetings. As a communication and collaboration mechanism, meetings have several strengths and weaknesses. Some of the weaknesses were addressed in the twentieth century with the telephone and the Internet. The telephone and the Internet, however, did not address every deficiency related to communication and collaboration.

Where there is a business need, a business solution appears, and project management grew from a discipline to a market. Project Management vendors appeared, offering "solutions" that promised to address every remaining deficiency with meetings, the telephone, and the Internet. Project teams, now called "users," responded lukewarmly. With respect to personal fulfillment, Project Management software ranks somewhere below purchasing gasoline and above root canals.

Civilians (people not on project teams) carried on with their lives, oblivious to the communication and collaboration problems faced by the business world. Although they weren't crying out for a solution, new technologies appeared which allowed them to communicate with each other, share useful and useless information with each other, and do this far more quickly, cheaply, and more efficiently than the best project teams. They weren't crying out for a solution, but they were nevertheless quick to employ these new technologies as they became available.

We can learn a great deal about project team collaboration by studying the impact and usage of these new technologies. This paper will examine some of the new technologies (YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and others) and shows why they work and what they might teach us about managing projects.

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Brian Leach, PMP is the founder and Managing Director of Steelray Software, a leading provider of project management software solutions. Brian has a Bachelor's degree in Math and Computer Science from Emory University and a Master's degree in Computer Science from Georgia Tech. Brian has managed projects for over 20 years and brings industry experience gained in the Computer Hardware (Harris, IBM), Automotive (Ford Motor Company), Telecommunications (Motorola), Open Source (Cygnus, Red Hat), and Software industries and sectors.

At Motorola, he led one of the teams that developed the world's first two-way wireless text messaging device (Pagerwriter 2000), the first wireless messaging device added to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. Since founding Steelray Software in 2000, Brian performs ongoing research and development on project



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schedule visualization and analysis. Brian has presented at the PMI College of Scheduling Conference, the Integrated Performance Management Conference, and other Project Management and Software Industry conferences.